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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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EVEREST INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP
P. O. BOX 708
NORTHBROOK, IL 60065

EXAMINER

RODRIGUEZ, RUTH C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 02/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/817,588

Applicant(s)

UEHARA ET AL.

Examiner

Ruth C. Rodriguez

Art Unit

3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 4 January 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 6, 8 and 9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6, 8 and 9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 April 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 6, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chao (US 2003/0145439 A1).

A buckle (2) comprises a socket (21), a plug (22) and a bridge (between 221). The plug has a tip end to be inserted to the socket and to be released from the socket by pressing from both sides of the socket (Fig. 8). The plug having a base formed on a base end (Fig. 8). At least a pair of lock arms extends from the base to the tip end of the plug (Fig. 8). At least one guide bar disposed between the lock arms (Fig. 8). An engaging part (ends of 221) is formed on a part of the lock arm to be engageable with the socket (Fig. 8). A pressing part (center of 221) is disposed at a part of the lock arm to be pressed when the socket is release (Fig. 8). The bridge connects the parts of at least the pair of lock arms and extends around a tip end of the guide bar (Fig. 8). The tip end of the guide bar is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to the both ends of the bridge and the bridge extends around the tip end of the guide bar at the central part thereof without contacting the tip end of the guide bar (Fig. 8).

The bridge is approximately V-shaped bent at the central part (Fig. 8).

The center angle of the approximately V-shaped is 90 degrees or less (Fig. 8).

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 10 and 11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 04 January 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

5. In response to the Applicant's argument that Chao does not include certain features of Applicant's invention, the limitations on which the Applicant relies (i.e. "the tip end of the guide bar does not extends beyond the ends of the alleged bridge") are not stated in the claims. It is the claims that define the claimed invention, and it is claims, not specifications that are anticipated or unpatentable. *Constant v. Advanced Micro-Devices Inc*, 7 USPQ2d 1064. In this case, the argument fails to persuade because claim recites that "the tip end of the guide bar is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to both ends of the bridge". Therefore, the tip end of the guide

bard does not have to extend beyond the ends of the bridge as argued by the Applicant but it rather has to be on the side of the tip end of the plug.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kasai (US 4,672,725), Saitou et al. (US 5,806,152), Anscher (US 6,311,374), Van Tassel (US 6,487,761) and Japanese Patent Document 06125803 A are cited to show state of the art with respect to a plug with a bridge connecting two locking arms.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth C. Rodriguez whose telephone number is (571) 272-7070. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 07:15 - 15:45.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on (571) 272-7075.


Submissions of your responses by facsimile transmission are encouraged. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-6640.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ruth C. Rodriguez
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3677

rcr
February 6, 2006


ROBERT J. SANDY
PRIMARY EXAMINER